The Definitive /r/CFBBall Tutorial (2026)

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What Is /r/CFBBall?

/r/CFBBall is a community of sports fans making amateur comics about college football drawn with little team-themed balls. We began in 2014 as an offshoot of /r/Polandball but have since developed our own unique culture and style.

Do I Need To Be Approved To Post Here?

No! The /r/CFBBall mod team does not screen submissions for anything other than rules violations. Many of us began by submitting low quality & unfunny comics and accidentally became talented.

What Are The Rules For Comics?

Please check the sidebar for the most up-to-date sub rules, but as of mid-2026:

- No circle tool on team characters *(e.g. you have to draw the team yourself)*
- No AI or tracing other subreddit artists' work *(e.g. you have to draw the team yourself)*
- No pupils in the eyes
- Comics must be related to college football
    - *Holiday comics are a traditional exception to this.*
- Comics should only name publicly known figures & institutions
    - *Coaches – Good, Players – Good, User You're Fighting On Reddit – Not Good*
- No sexually explicit or pornographic comics *(don't ask…)*

Is There Lore?

While /r/CFBBall lacks an official canon, we maintain the page **Common Gags and Team Portrayals** to record popular jokes that have built up over the years. You are free to ignore any and all of them.

Are There Official Team Designs?

While /r/CFBBall does not force artists into any specific designs, our subreddit flairs represent the community's most frequently used designs and serve as a common visual language. These designs can be found in the **Team Design Index** page.

"But I Don't Know How To Draw!"

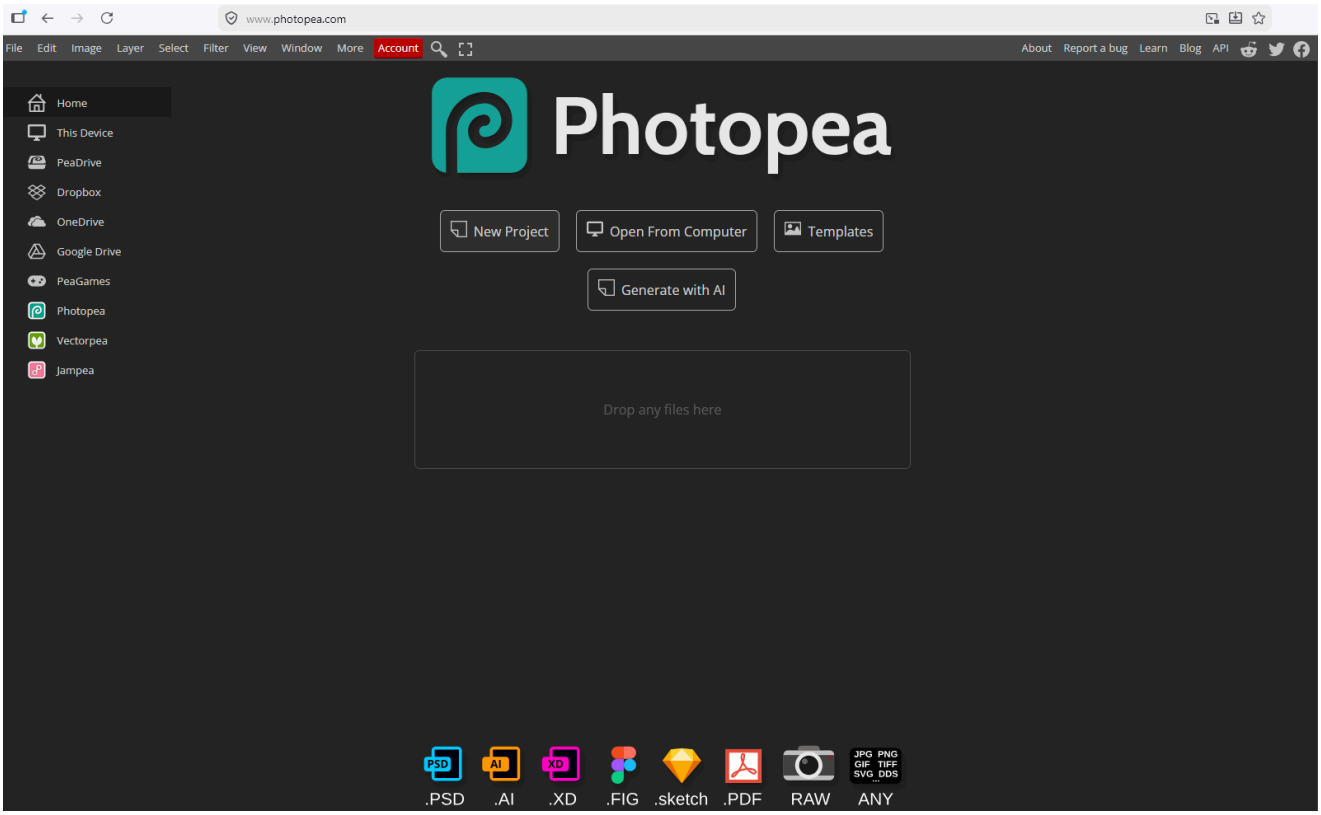
You're in the exact right kind of community for a beginner cartoonist. Follow along for a basic guide on how to use digital art tools and draw your first team *(Pg 2-12)*. From there feel free to move onto the advanced tutorials!

Drawing For Complete Newbies: A Tutorial

This three-part tutorial will show you how to navigate an image editor, pull images for reference, and draw your first team – Florida!

Part 1: Navigating Image Editing Software

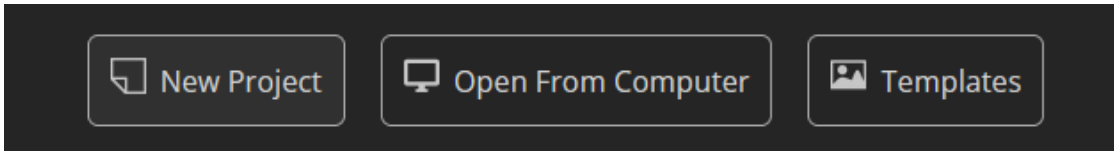
1. Let's start by visiting the Photopea website. This is a free browser-based image editing software that's fairly representative of these programs and their options.



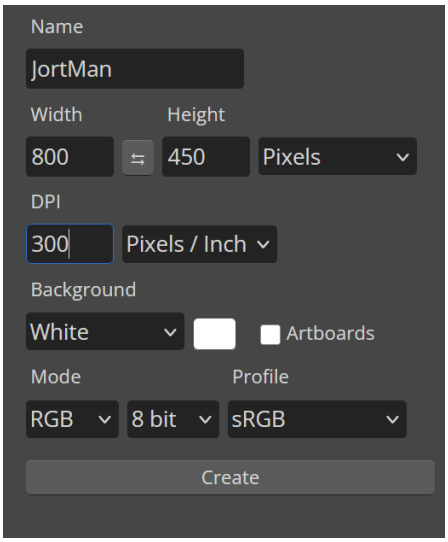
Some other image editing software used by past poll artists is listed below. Paid software mostly nets you increased versatility and a greater focus on advanced tools like vector drawing:

- Paint.NET ***(Free)***
- Gimp ***(Free)***
- FireAlpaca ***(Free)***
- Inkscape ***(Free)***
- Clip Studio Paint ***(Paid)***
- Ibis Paint X ***(Paid)***
- Adobe Photoshop ***(Paid)***
- Adobe Illustrator ***(Paid)***

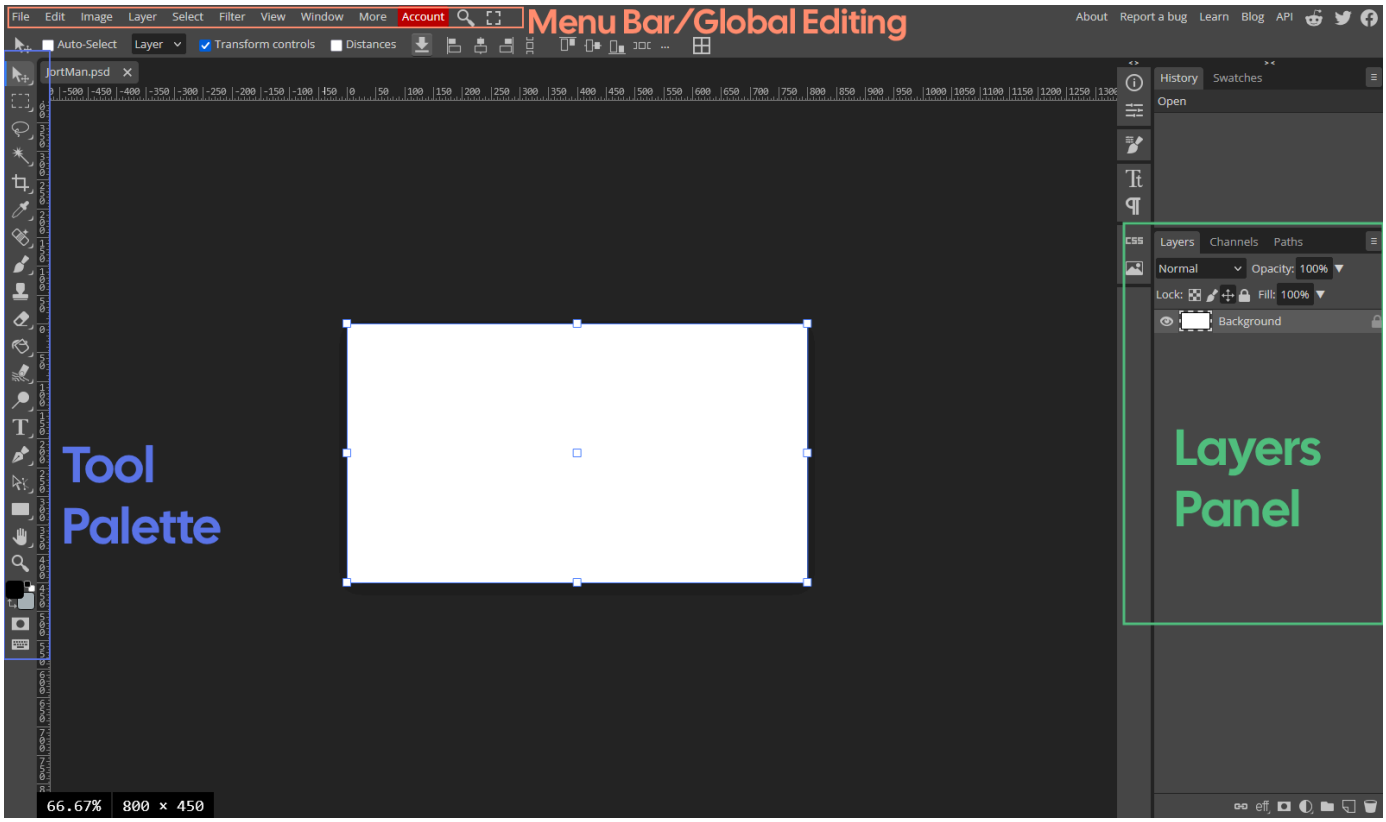
With that out of the way, click to open a **new project**.



2. The new project setup window prompts us to define the parameters of our image, such as width, height, and dots per inch *(that last one is mostly relevant for print)*. I'll set these to 800x450px and 300 DPI, as I find this panel size translates well to reading comics on mobile.



3. This should bring us to the actual editing screen. On the left hand side we have the **tool palette**, up top we've got some global editing options, and on the lower right we have the **layers panel**.



4. Below are the most important tools available to us in the **tool palette** for comic-making.

This is the **move** tool and lets you move, rotate, or resize the currently active layer. Holding the shift key while resizing forces the image to keep the same proportions.

This is the **eyedropper** tool. It changes the current active color to whatever you're sampling from. Alongside the color picker this is your workhorse color selection tool.

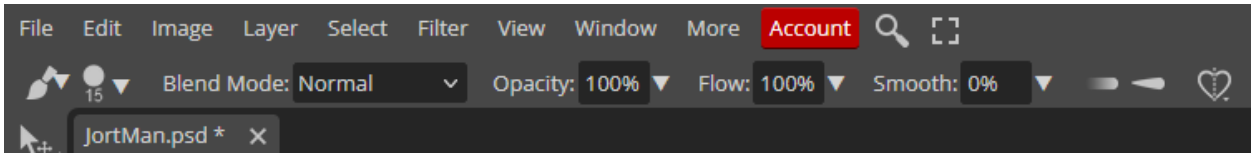
This is the **brush** tool and it draws things. Most artists work with the variant **pencil** tool, which has sharper edges and can be accessed by right-clicking the brush tool icon. You can change brush size, shape, and (in some software) mouse sensitivity.

This is the **eraser** tool. As you might expect, it erases pixels from the currently active layer.

This is the **text** tool. This tool rather straightforwardly allows you to create text. You can change the text's color by highlighting it and clicking on one of the colors you have saved in the color picker.

This is usually called the **color picker** and allows you to change the color that brush/text tools use. The color on the left is considered the "foreground" and is active by default, while the color on the right stays on the backburner for reference.

5. The menu bar, as mentioned, focuses largely on global settings. Of interest are the **file menu** (which allows us to open & save new projects) and the **layer menu** which allows us to make new layers for the layers panel.



6. Think of **layers** as a series of transparent sheets on top of each other that you can draw & erase on without affecting your other work. Higher layers cover up lower layers.

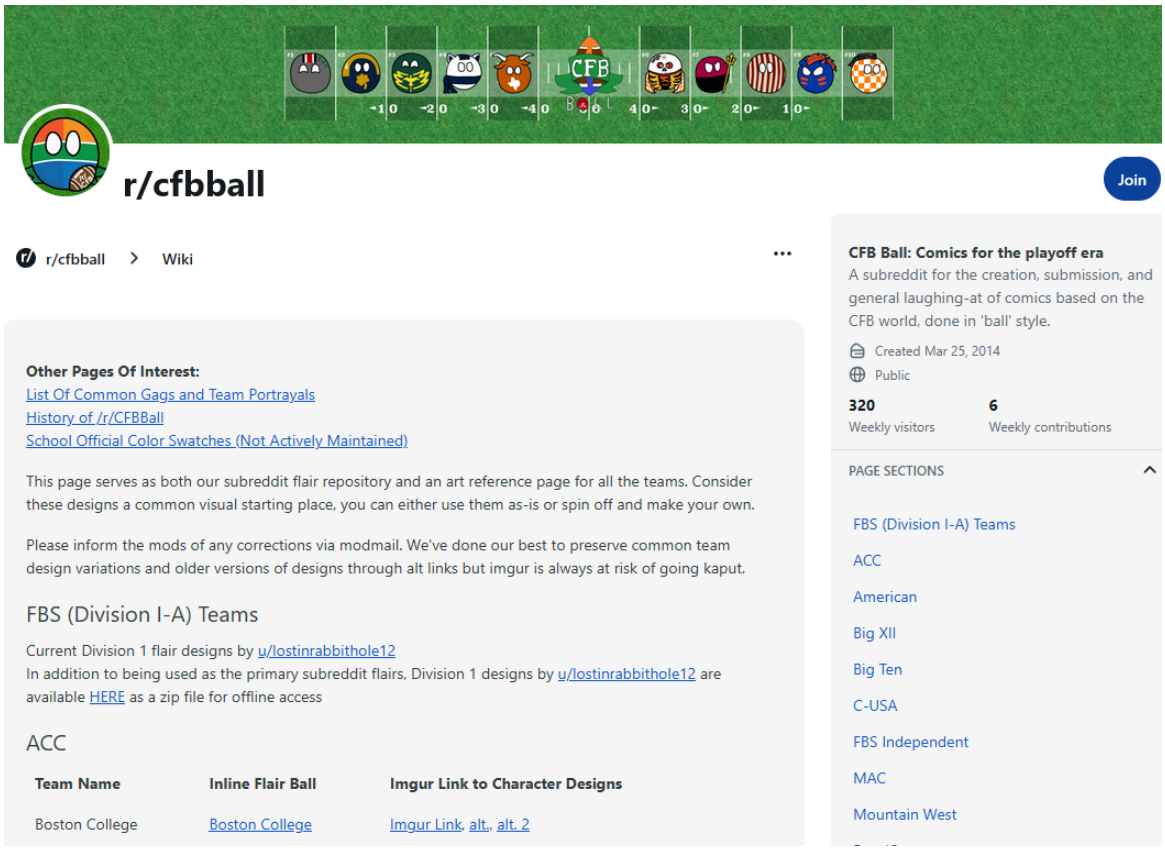
Onto the next tutorial!

Part 2: Using Team Reference Images

A lot of novice artists are under the impression that "real artists" draw everything straight from their imagination. This is not so. When drawing something unfamiliar to them, most artists draw from ***reference****. That is, they keep a reference drawing or photo by their side to suggest where the lines "should" go & what the colors "should" be, just like observing a model for a figure drawing class. This is distinct from copying or tracing … it's still you choosing how to render the design yourself.*

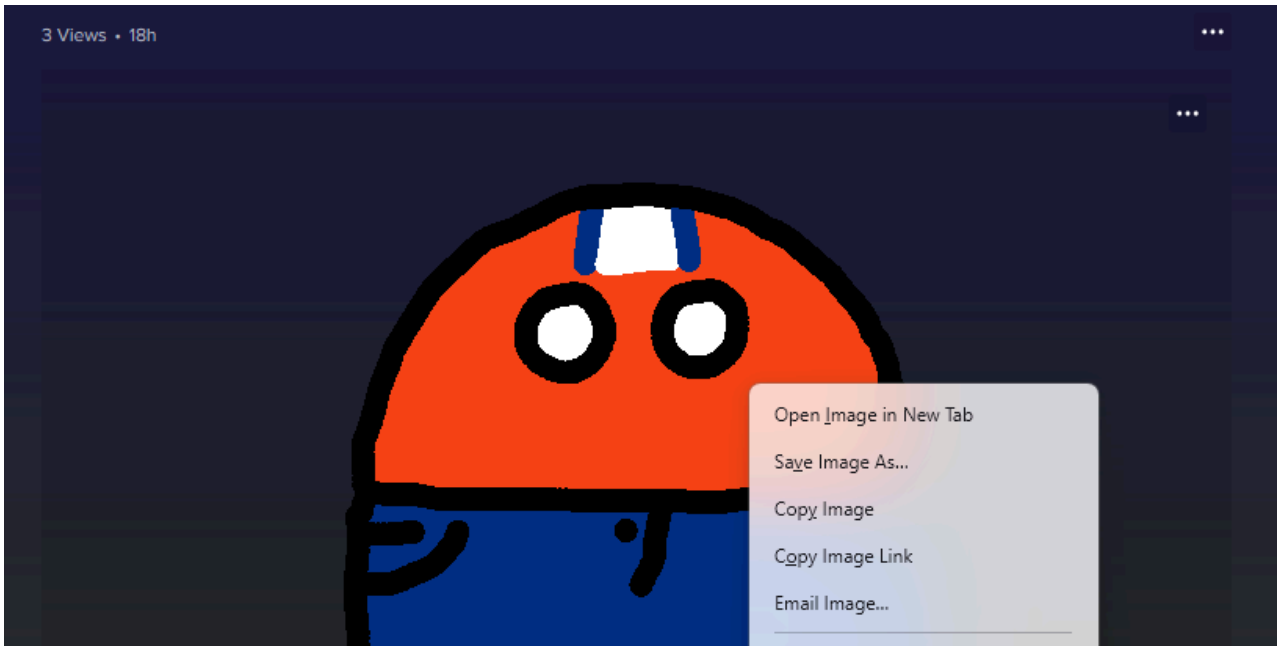
As such, this part will teach you how to find and add team references for learning.

1. The most important reference library for any /r/cfbball artist is our wiki's **Team Design Index** page. This contains the subreddit standard designs & colors for teams.

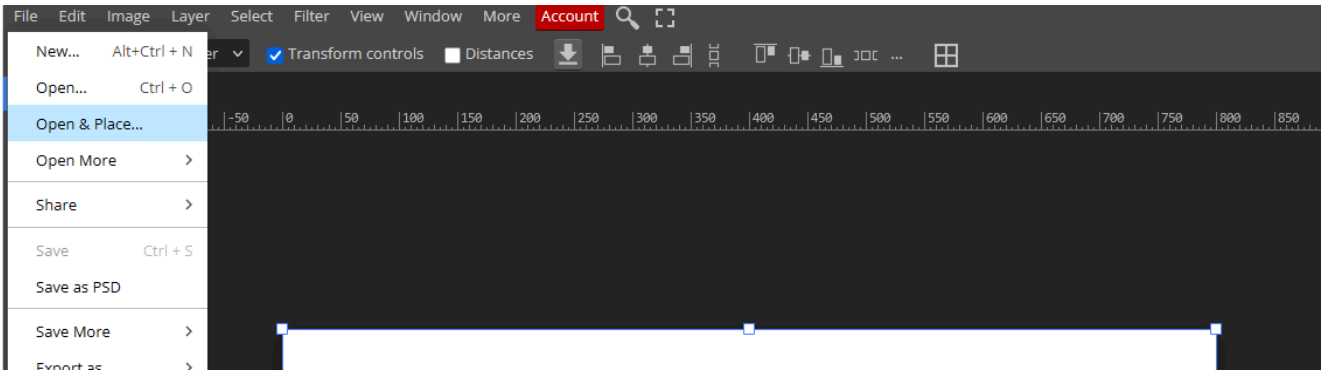


2. To pull a reference from this page, simply find your desired team and click one of the imgur links to get a full-size reference.

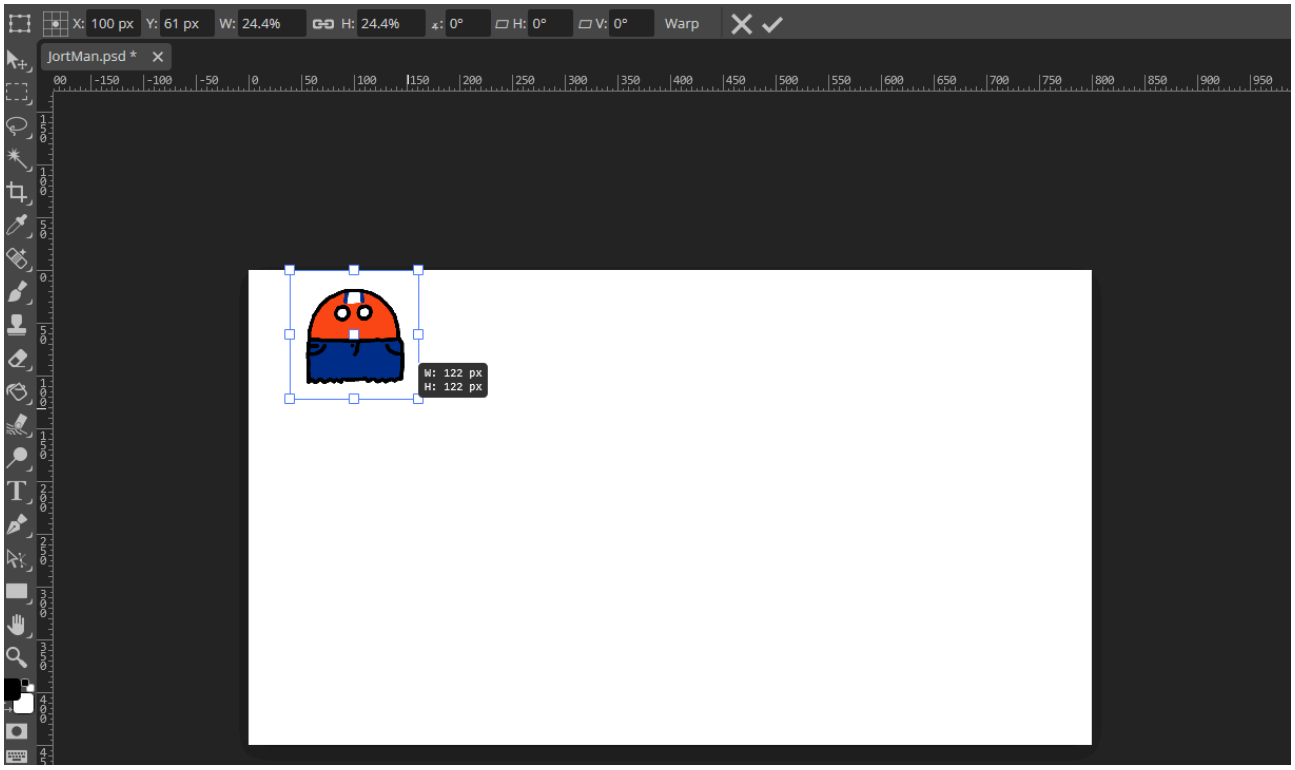
3. Right click on the image and save it to your computer.



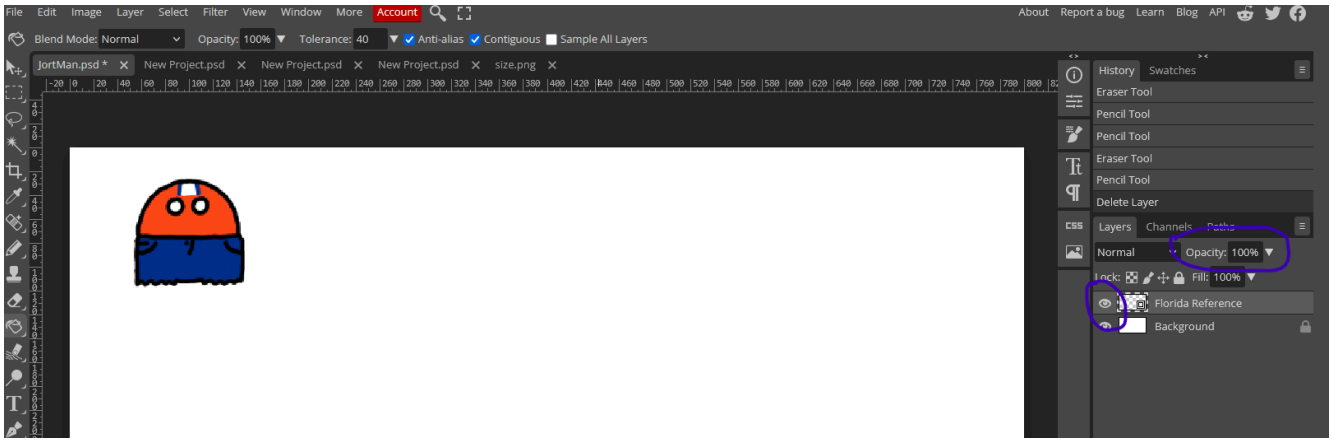
4. Now you can load it as a new project into Photopea by using the File - > Open & Place menu option. This should import the image as a new layer so you can manipulate it on its own.



5. Now you can move & resize it somewhere unobtrusive. If you hold the shift key you can force the image to retain its current proportions when resizing.



6. In the layers panel, you can also use the opacity slider or the eye icon (to the left of the layer in the layers panel) to hide the image reference from view as needed.



And that's how to use team references!

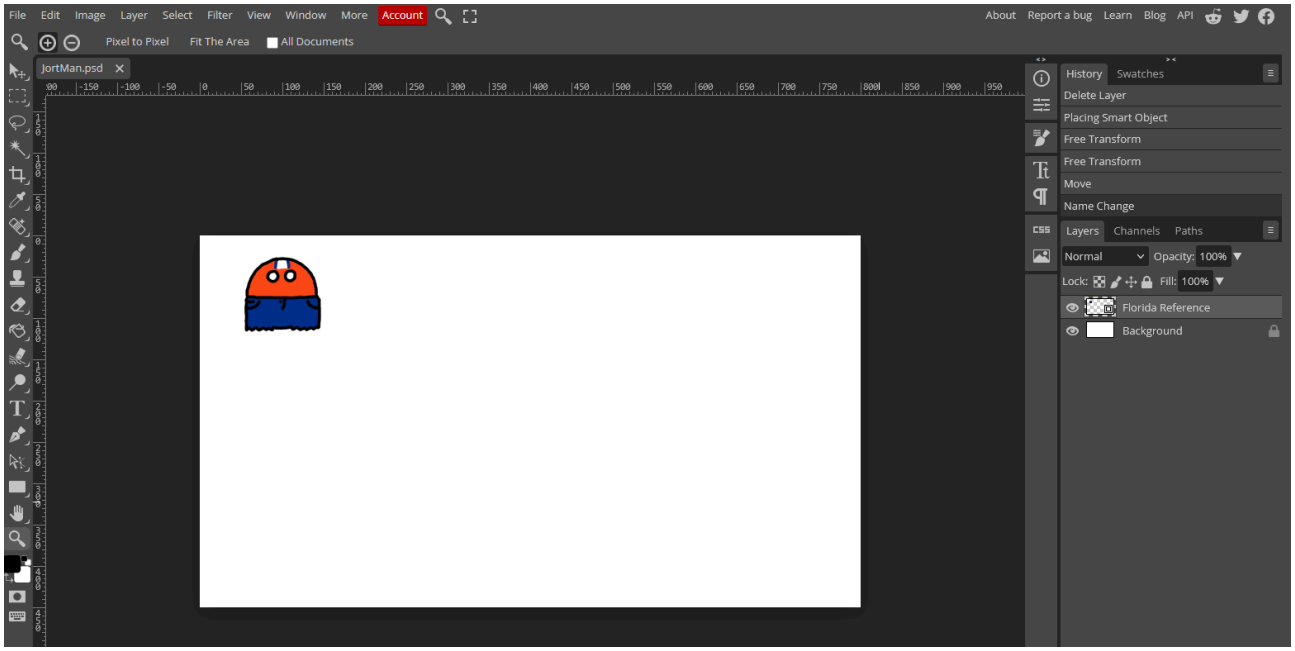
I've been making comics since 2018 and I still pull references for teams I don't regularly draw.

You can also use Google Images for photo references on clothing, trophies, backgrounds, etc. We don't enforce the "no tracing" rule on photo references since they're generally going to be transformative in nature and don't detract from the unique qualities of your art.

Part 3: Drawing Your First Team

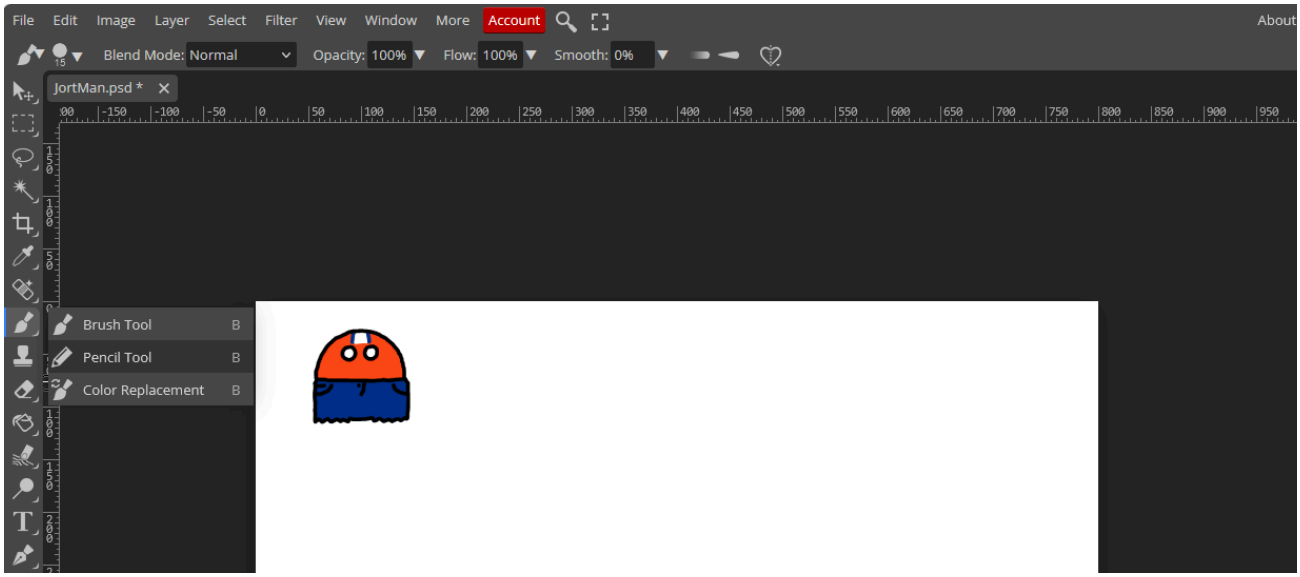
Florida will be a useful tutorial team because they have a multi-layered design that is forgiving and easy to conceptualize - we all know what jorts look like regardless of the drawing's perspective!

1. If you followed the previous tutorials, you should have a Photopea project file with a reference image of Florida up in the corner. If not, this will be the starting point for this tutorial.

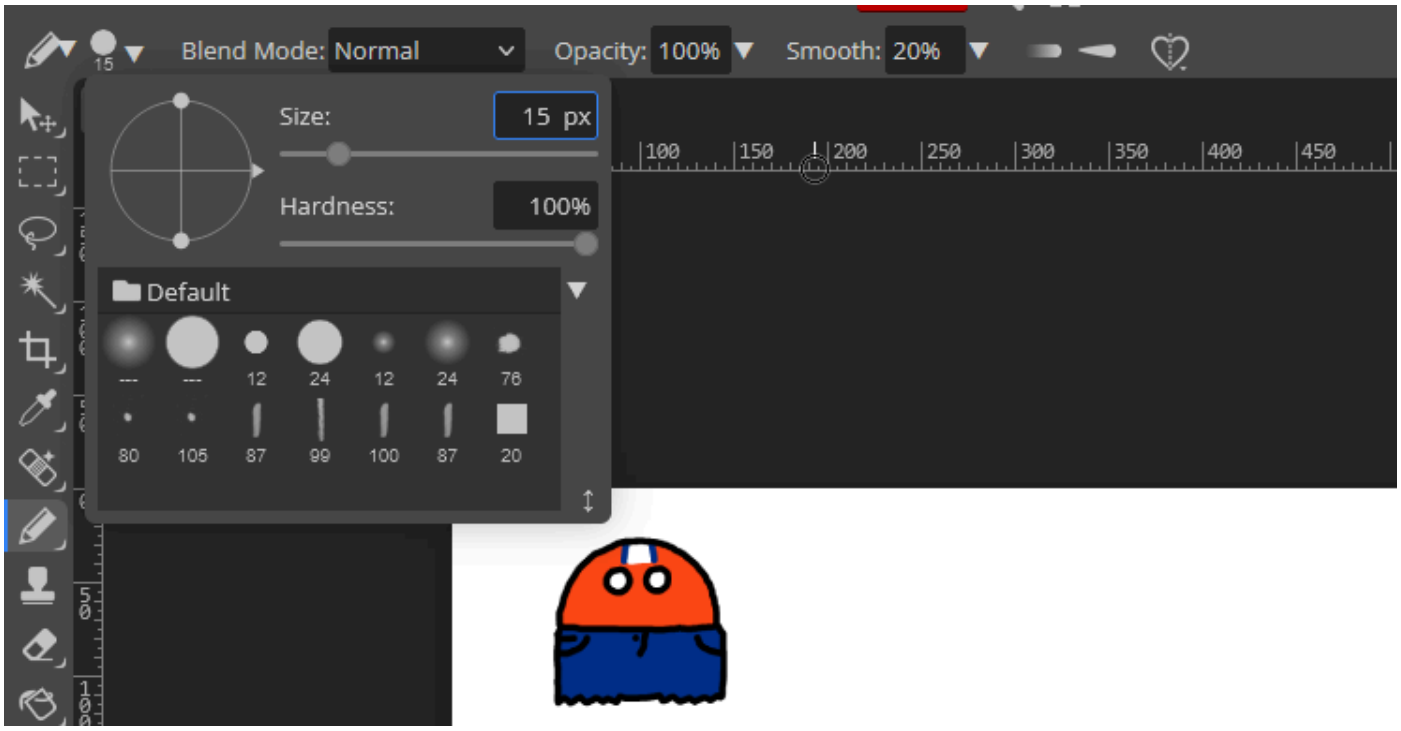


2. Let's start by prepping our brush.

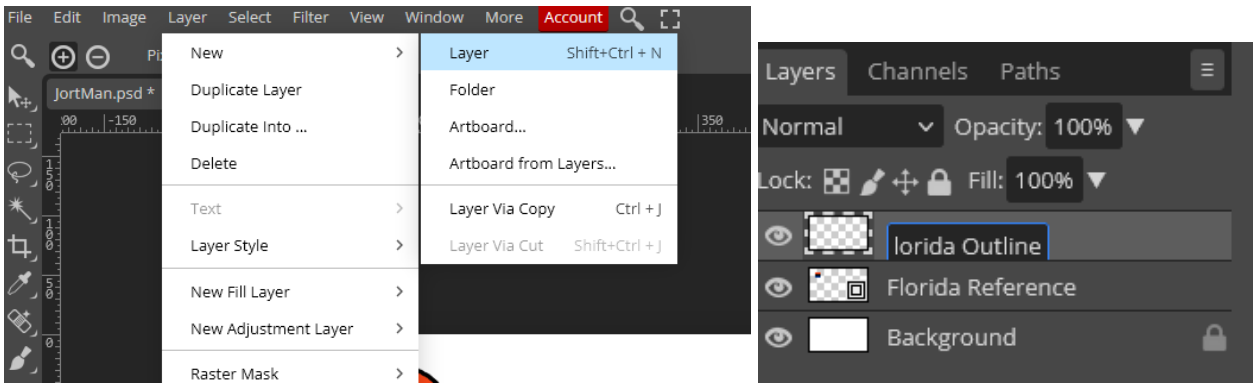
   Go to the tool palette to the brush tool , then right-click to get it to turn into pencil tool . This nets you a drawing tool with sharper edges, which suits the pixel-art-adjacent style of most comics *(though it's not required - perhaps you'll go for a more painterly style?)*.



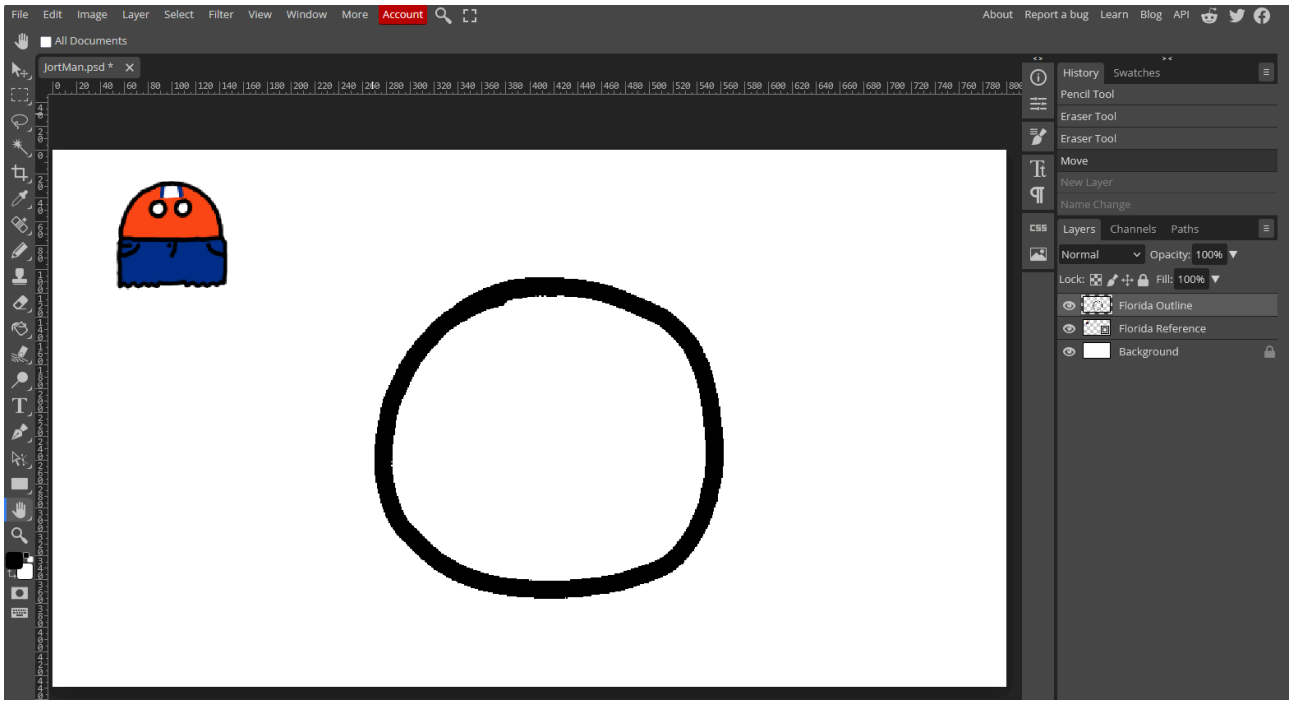
3. Next, let's mess with the pencil size and "smooth" (sensitivity). This is a very individual choice - some artists like thick lines, some like thin.



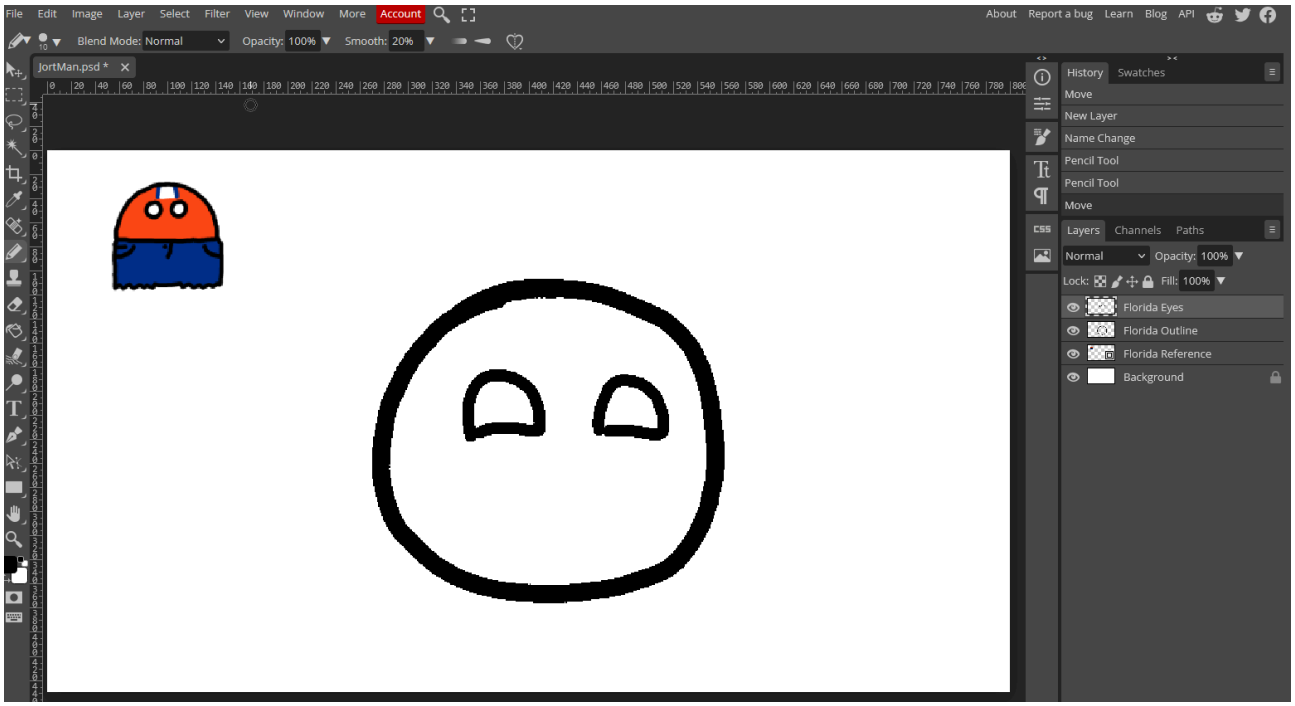
4. Now let's head up to the menu bar and make a **new layer** for the outline of the team. You can right click on the name in the layers panel to rename, if desired.



5. Okay, it's the moment we've been waiting for! Most character designs in /r/cfbball are built on top of a circle with a solid black outline, so let's draw that outline. This is the team's **"body"**.

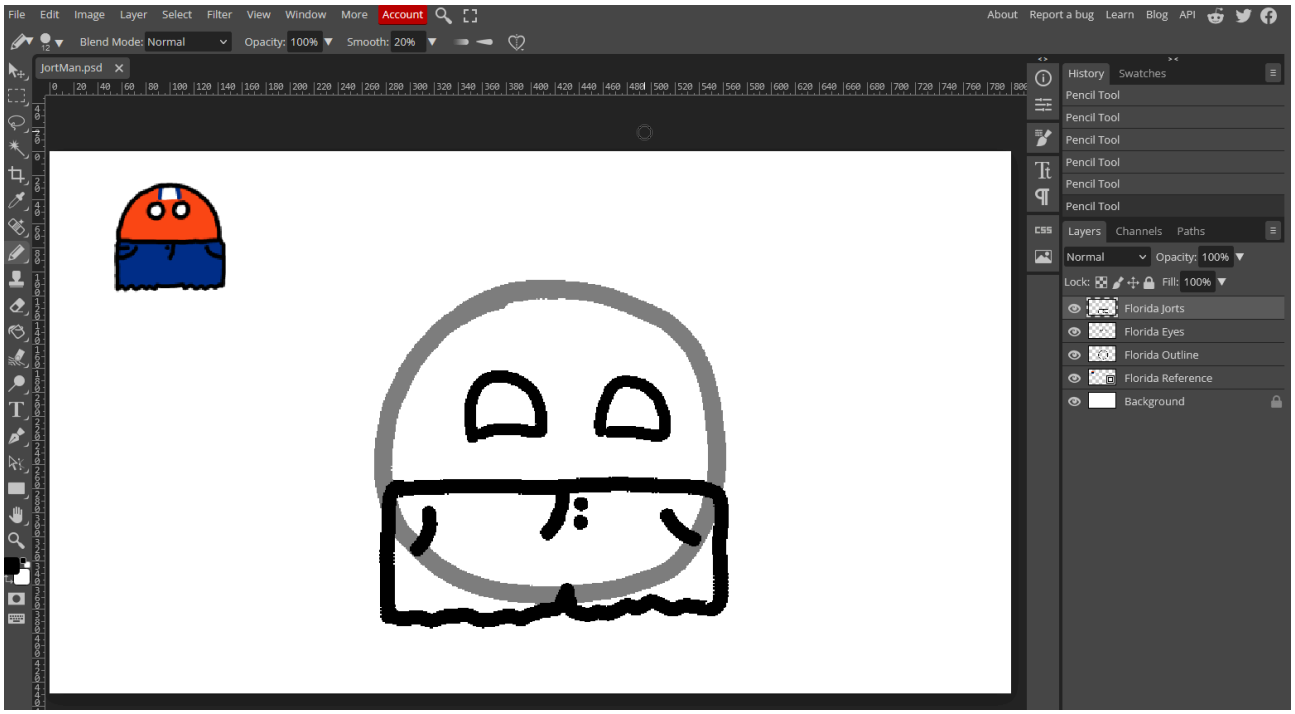


6. Now make a new layer and draw the outline of the **eyes**. I usually use a smaller brush size for this than the main team ball - in general smaller details tend to work well with a smaller brush.

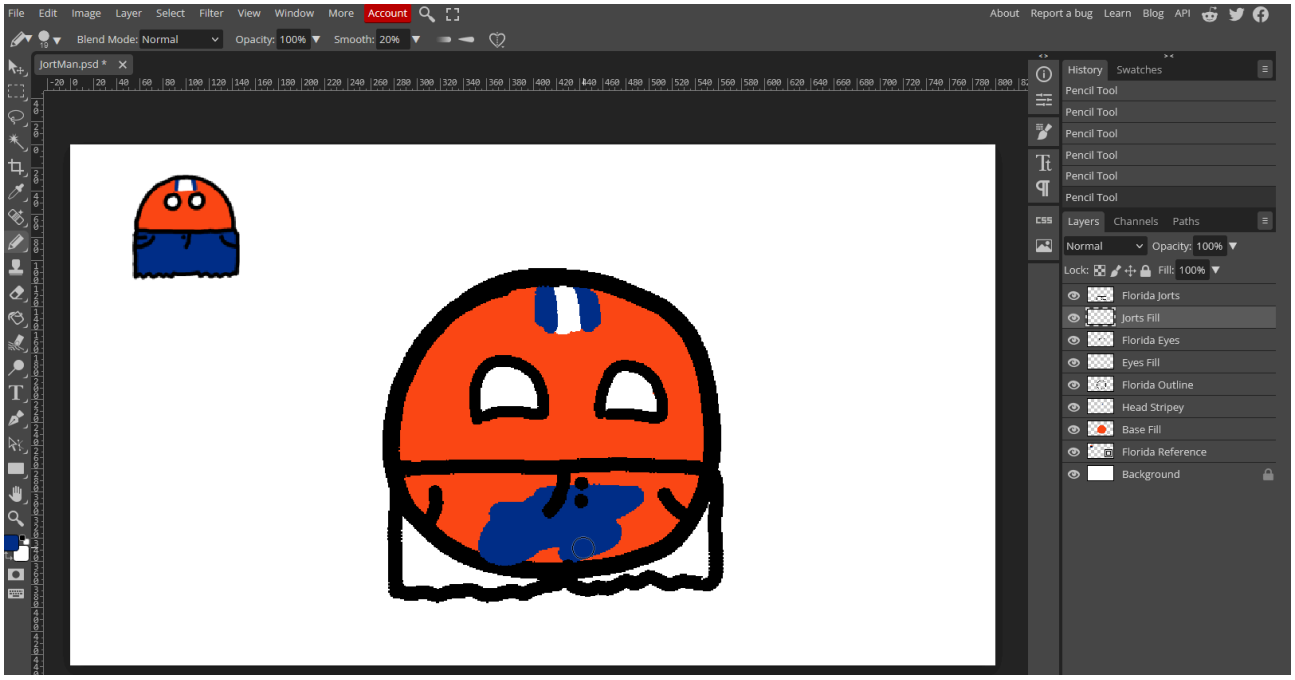


7. Make another layer and draw the **jorts**.

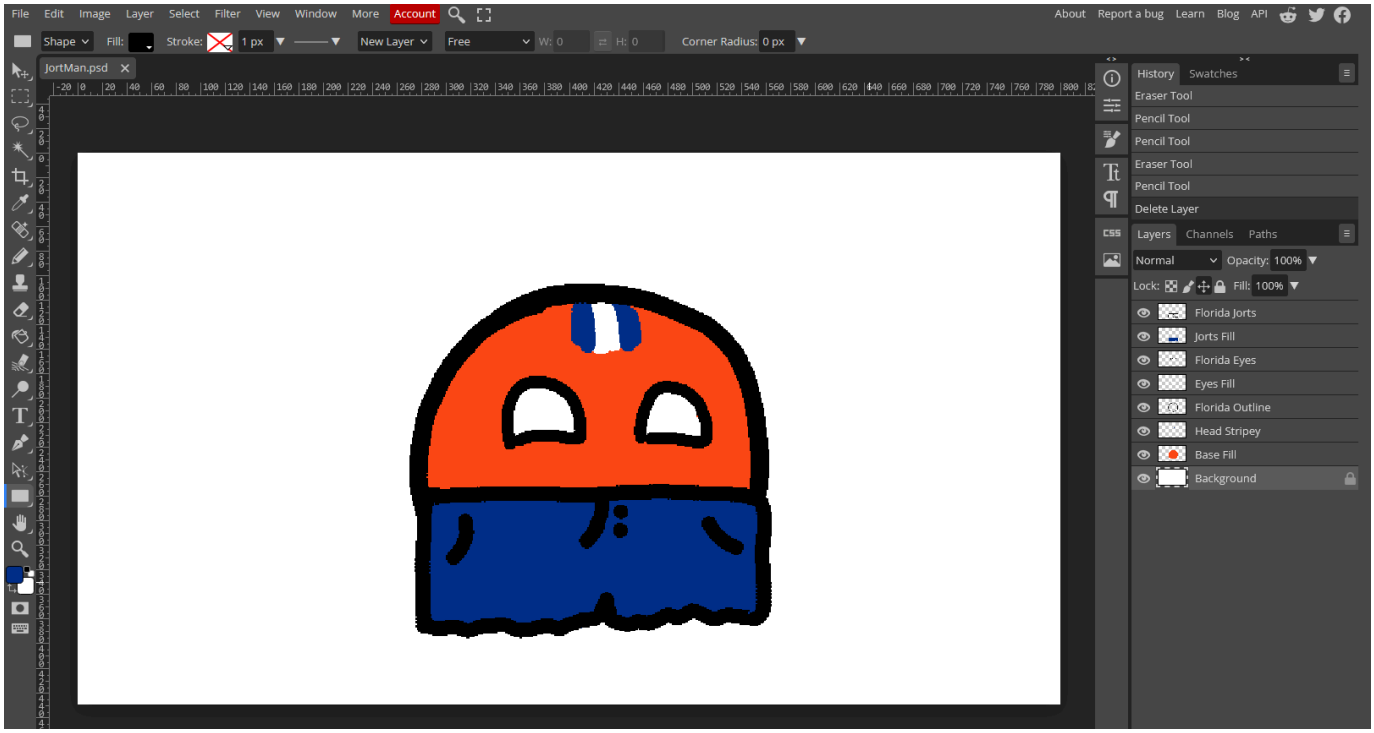
   Messing with layer opacity (via the layer panel on the right) can be useful here when drawing over the team outline - here, the team outline has been adjusted to 50% opacity.



8. Add layers in between to fill in the colors. The eyedropper tool is your friend here - use it to sample colors from the reference.



9. Delete the reference and voila, you've made Florida!



This concludes our team-drawing tutorial.

While not every artist uses the same workflows I hope this has served as a starting place and shown that it's not so intimidating to begin your comic-making career after all.

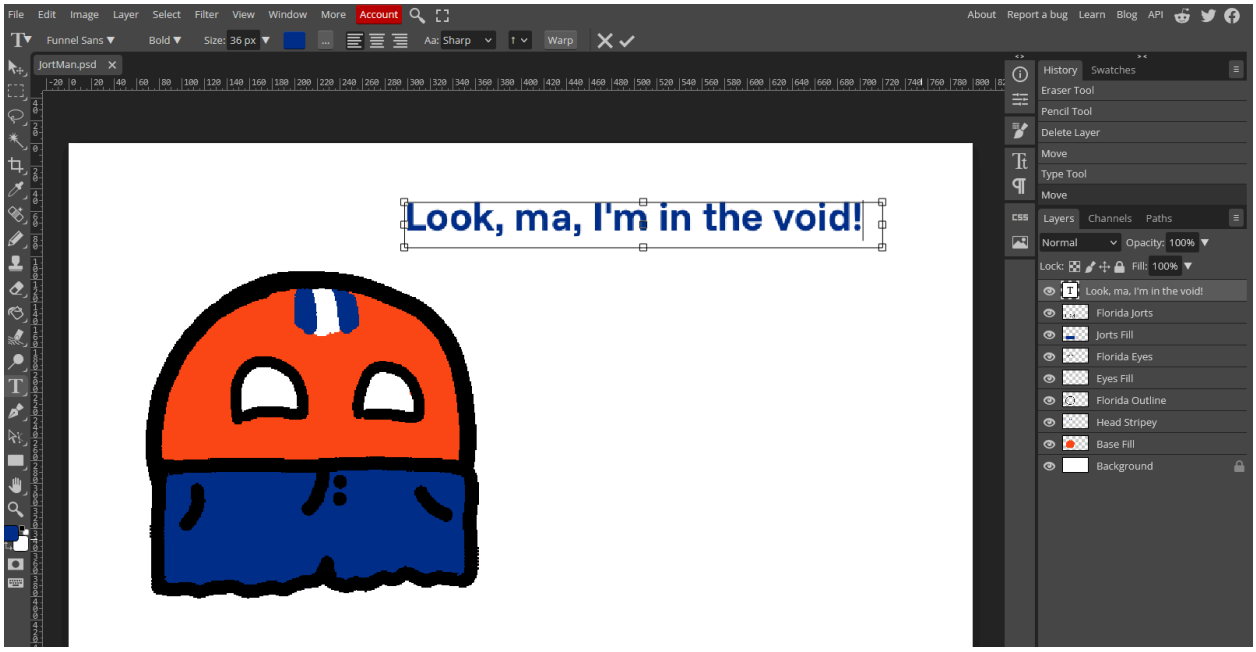
Plus, now you can add "image software expertise (shitposting)" to your resume!

Advanced Tutorial: Adding Text Outlines

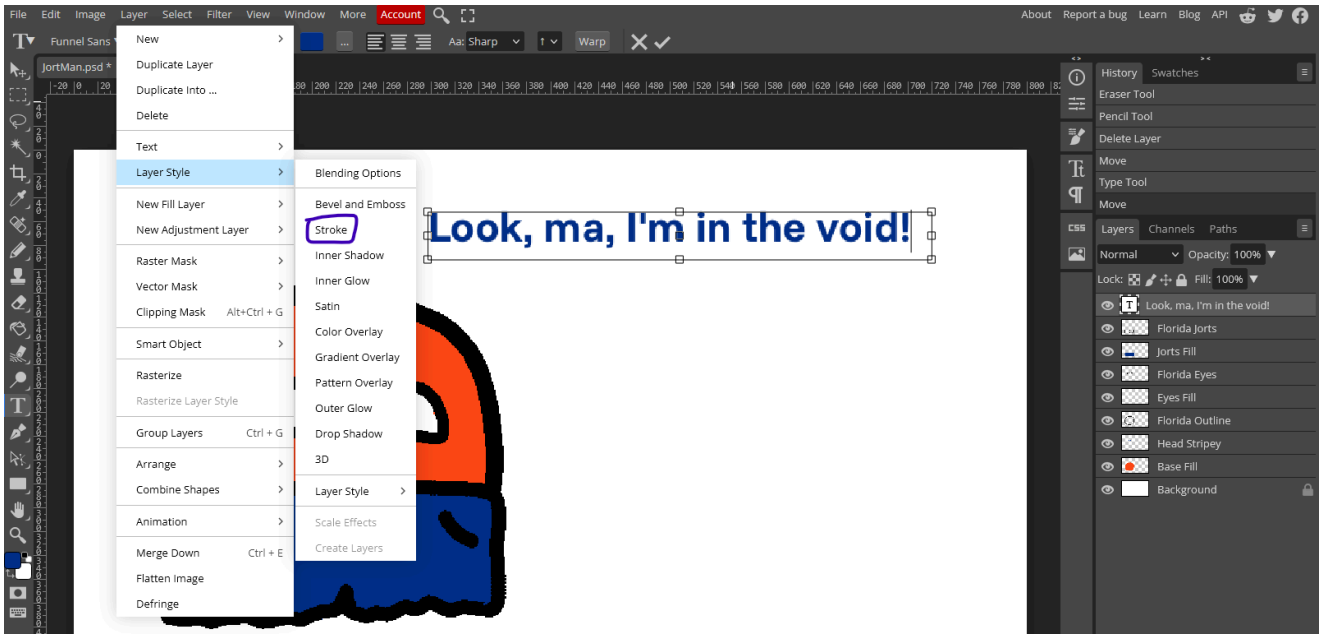
Text outlines can be a useful tool for distinguishing text in comics with complex backgrounds. This tutorial covers how to create these in Photopea.

1. First, obviously, let's begin by creating a text layer by clicking on the text icon .

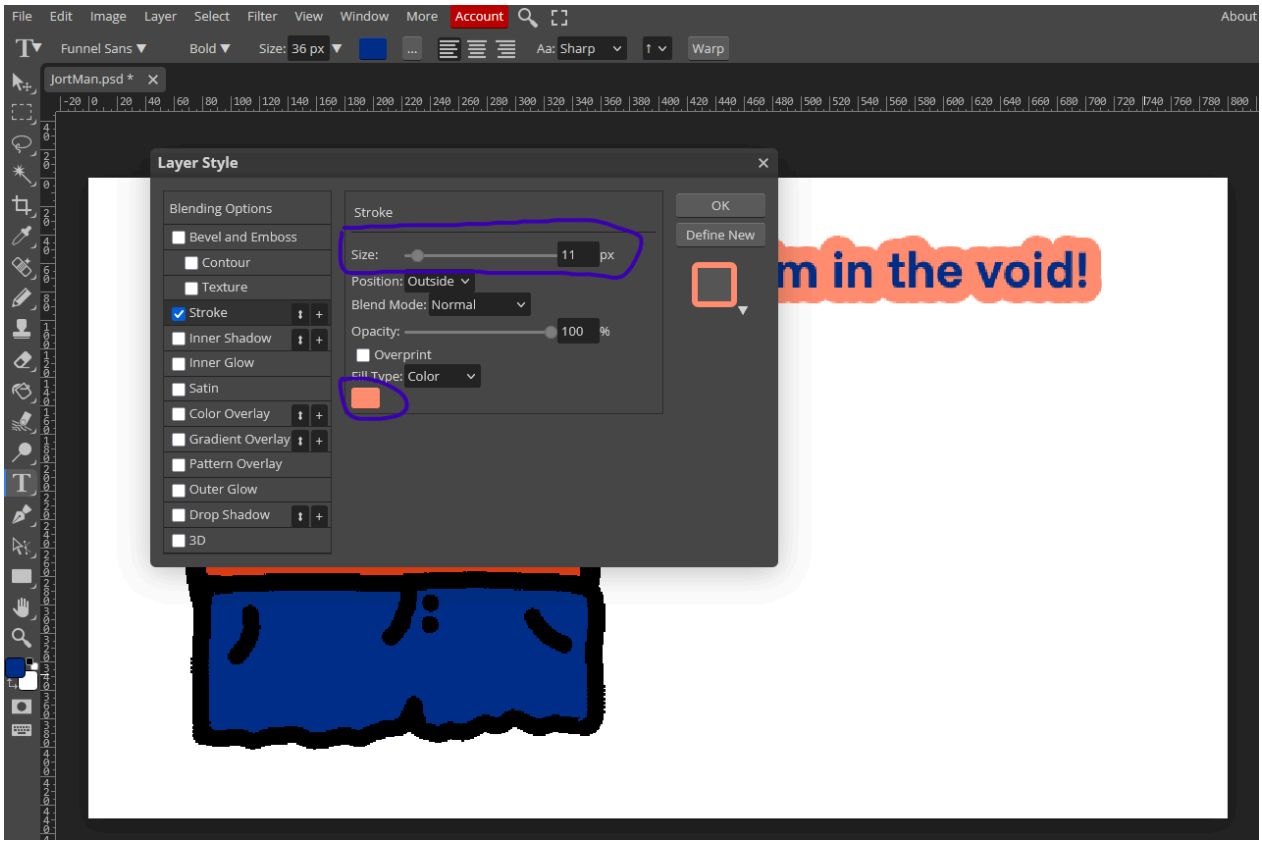
   Type in whatever nonsense you want.



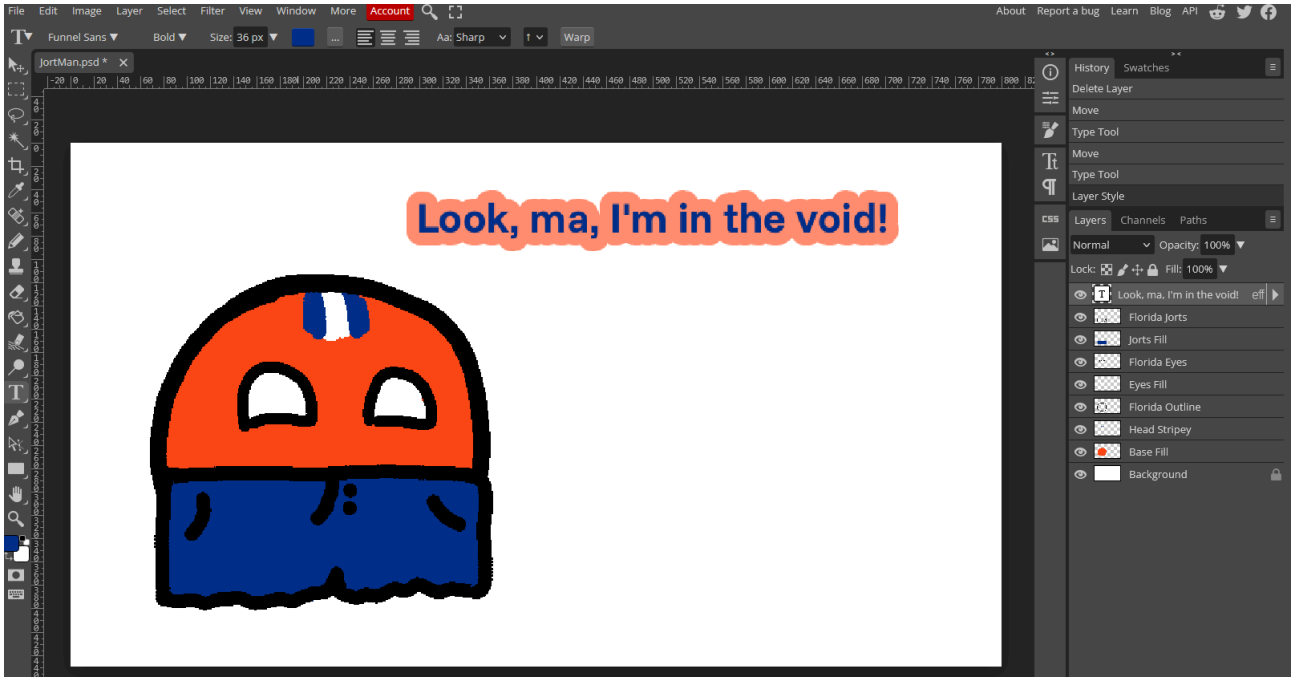
2. Next, go to the menu bar and go to Layers - Layer Style - Stroke.



3. This will allow you to create a text outline. Use the size slider to adjust thickness and the color square to pick a color.



4. And done!



Advanced Tutorial: Conveying Emotions

This tutorial provides references to give you ideas on how to depict different emotional states.

Happy

Thrilled

Cheerful

Winking

Smug

Confident

Evil Joy

Inquisitive

Angry

Furious

Annoyed

Tired

Yelling

Defiant

Suspicious

Unhinged

Sad

Miserable

Crying (light)

Crying (heavy)

Shocked

Afraid

Terrified

Confused

In Pain

High

(Red color, normal size)

H8tred

(Red color, tiny size)

Hypnotoad

(An exception to the no pupil rule)

Chaotic

(Remniscient of Chaos)

Advanced Tutorial: Writing Advice

Some final words of advice for writing great CFBBall scripts.

1. Try giving every team yo your comic at least **two** personality traits or gimmicks. Even minor dimensions bring characters to life.

2. How do fans see the team? How do rivals see the team? Mix that together and both camps will appreciate the portrayal.

3. If something feels boring, figure out if it's necessary. If it's necessary, figure out how to make it more interesting.

4. Show the comic to a friend and see if you have to explain any of the plot or character identities to them.

5. Combine dialogue with actions! Moving teams closer/further from each other, pulling out props, etc can spice up a back-and-forth.

6. Consider what title and first panel would pull in a reader scrolling idly through their phone.

Some Sources Of Inspiration:

- Team messageboards/subreddits
- Rival messageboards/subreddits
- /r/CFB game threads
- Team coaches and history
- Team mascots or names
- Fan traditions
- Regional stereotypes
- KnowRivalry *(for "objective" measurement of rivalry dynamics)*

Go forth and make great comics!